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Spring-UP Scroll

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Gifty's Spring-UP Story: Four Years of Impact, Now Pursuing Graduate Studies at Georgia State

Gifty Asantewah Kankam's journey is a compelling example of how volunteerism can serve as a catalyst for personal growth, professional development, and global opportunity.

A Chartered Accountant and alumna of the University of Ghana, Gifty holds a Bachelor of Science in Administration (Accounting major). With over six years of experience in financial reporting, budgeting, and internal controls, she has built a solid foundation in applying international accounting standards, managing audits, and leading financial teams.

Today, Gifty is pursuing a Master of Professional Accountancy at Georgia State University, where she also serves as a Graduate Assistant. Her transition into graduate school was shaped not only by her professional expertise but also by her four-year leadership journey and community service with Spring-UP Global Network.

As Finance Lead at Spring-UP, Gifty played a strategic role in fundraising and financial management across the organisation's flagship programmes; iRead iLead Campaign, Mentor Me Programme, and the Back-to-School Drive. These initiatives are central to Spring-UP's mission of driving literacy equity and career readiness in underserved communities through libraries, mentorship, and STEAM education.

Her leadership was instrumental in the successful implementation of the \$55,000 Deloitte WorldClass Initiative, which enabled the construction of eight libraries across five regions in Ghana within 20 months, reaching over 23,000 learners in its first year. She also led fundraising efforts to establish the Agbekotsekpo D/A Basic School library following COVID-19 school closures, an urgent intervention to address learning loss among vulnerable students.

“Volunteering gave me the space to apply my skills in real-time, with real consequences. It challenged me to think strategically, communicate clearly, and lead with empathy. These experiences prepared me for graduate school in ways that go beyond the classroom.”

— Gifty Asantewah Kankam



Gifty's impact extended beyond financial systems into direct community engagement. She actively participated in outreach programmes, earlier this year she participated in Spring-UP's Career Guidance and STEM Mentorship Seminar at Agbekotsekpo D/A Basic School, where she led conversations on future careers, financial literacy, and personal growth.

Even after handing over her Finance Lead role in April 2025, Gifty continued to serve with passion. On May 30, 2025, she led an outreach to over 500 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) candidates at the Kwashieman Cluster of Schools in Accra. Drawing from her personal academic journey, she shared practical exam strategies and mobilised resources to donate 120 math sets to support the students.

Whether mentoring learners, managing budgets, or raising funds, Gifty consistently brought clarity, compassion, and commitment to every initiative.

Though she has transitioned into graduate studies, Gifty continues to offer financial guidance and oversight to Spring-UP Global Network, ensuring the systems she helped build remain strong and sustainable.

Her legacy is visible in the programmes she supported, the structures she strengthened, and the lives she helped shape. Spring-UP Global Network proudly celebrates Gifty's admission to Georgia State University and honours her for demonstrating how volunteer work can be a powerful tool for community development, youth empowerment, and lifelong learning.

Spring-UP Empowers Hohoe Learners Through Back-to-School Support

Outreach Highlights Progress in Reading and Learning Across Beneficiary Schools

Spring-UP Global Network has reaffirmed its commitment to improving literacy and learning outcomes in underserved communities through a Back-to-School outreach in Hohoe, Volta Region. The initiative, held on Friday, 12th September 2025, focused on donating essential learning supplies to students and assessing the impact of the library project funded as part of the Deloitte WorldClass Initiative in Ghana.

The visit was guided by two core objectives: to support academic readiness by equipping students with essential learning materials to help them begin the 2025/2026 academic year with confidence, and to celebrate literacy progress by showcasing the impact of the library inaugurated in May 2024 through student reading presentations and testimonials.

The team visited two beneficiary schools, Gbi-Central RC Primary & Junior High School and St. Teresa's Girls' Demonstration JHS, where they engaged students in interactive literacy activities and distributed educational materials, including exercise books, pens, and pencils.

At St. Teresa's Girls' Demonstration JHS, the team engaged students in a reading contest and spelling bee, awarding prizes to top performers and encouraging all learners to cultivate daily reading habits and public speaking skills. The activities created a lively and interactive learning environment that reinforced the importance of literacy and vocabulary development.

Speaking during the visit, Akorfa Ama Akoto, Executive Director at Spring-UP Global Network, emphasized the importance of sustained engagement with schools to ensure the long-term success of literacy interventions. "We believe that access to books must be matched with motivation and mentorship. That's why we return, not just to donate, but to inspire," she said.

The visit also included a review of the library facilities at Gbi-Central RC Primary & JHS, where students shared personal testimonies of how the library has improved their academic performance and confidence. Some of the boys highlighted their participation in The Bookworm competition on GHOne TV, attributing their success to the resources and reading culture fostered by the library.



Mr Prince Gafah, School Improvement Support Officer (SISO), commended the initiative, stating, “Spring-UP is intentional about their support to schools. This kind of support goes beyond donations; you are building a culture of learning. The students are more confident, more curious, and more engaged. We need more of this kind of partnership to sustain the gains we’re seeing.”

Students expressed heartfelt appreciation to Deloitte through handwritten letters, acknowledging the role the organization played in making the library project possible. Teachers and school executives also shared their optimism about the sustainability of the initiative and its growing impact on learners.

Spring-UP Global Network’s Back-to-School Drive in Hohoe not only provided material support but also reinforced the value of literacy, confidence, and community engagement. The organization continues to champion literacy equity and career readiness through its iRead iLead Campaign and other strategic interventions across Ghana.



Building Resilient Change-Makers: Spring-UP Hosts Transformative Volunteer Workshop

Spring-UP Global Network continues to empower its vibrant volunteer community through transformative learning experiences. On July 19, 2025, as part of its Empowered by SUGN series, the organisation hosted a capacity-building webinar titled “Building Resilient and Adaptable Change-Makers.” The session was designed to equip volunteers with practical tools and strategies to thrive amidst the demands of academic, professional, and personal life.

The session was moderated by Ms. Philipa Sampson, Lead of Spring-UP’s People and Culture Unit. In her welcome address, she underscored the importance of cultivating mental resilience and practical strategies to navigate the multifaceted responsibilities volunteers often juggle.

The Facilitator, Mr. Zachariah Zinnoba Bandiibu, Finance Lead at Spring-UP, brought a rich blend of experience as a financial professional, youth advocate, and former peer counselor. He opened with a thought-provoking question: “What do we understand by being resilient and adaptable?”—sparking insightful contributions from participants and setting the tone for a highly interactive session.

Mr. Bandiibu framed the discussion with religious and philosophical reflections, referencing Genesis 8:22 and Charles Darwin’s wisdom on adaptability. Using vivid metaphors and real-life examples, he introduced three core drivers of resilience:

- Activate Learning – Embrace growth during times of uncertainty and pressure.
- Strengthen Personal Adaptability – Cultivate a mindset that responds constructively to challenges.
- Reinforce with Purpose – Align actions with deeper personal and organisational meaning.

A standout moment of the session was the distinction between intentions and goal-based desires. Through practical scenarios, Mr. Bandiibu encouraged volunteers to focus on consistent effort and learning rather than rigid outcomes. This mindset shift was further explored through personal stories shared by participants, illustrating how beliefs shape performance and results.

The webinar also introduced the APR Model, a practical framework for building resilience:

- A – Awareness: Reflect on challenges and internal responses.
- P – Pause: Center yourself before reacting.
- R – Reframe: Find opportunities in adversity.

Mr. Bandiibu urged volunteers to embrace creativity, openness, and curiosity, cautioning against reactive and closed-minded behaviours that hinder growth in a rapidly changing world.

The session concluded with a Q&A session, final reflections from Ms. Akorfa Ama Akoto, Executive Director of SUGN, and a virtual group photo.

Volunteers left the meeting energised, equipped with actionable strategies to thrive as adaptable leaders in today’s dynamic landscape.

The Empowered by SUGN series is an ongoing initiative by the People and Culture Unit of Spring-UP Global Network to support volunteers in their personal and professional development journeys.

Access to Libraries Opens Doors: Gbi Central RC Boys Compete Nationally in Bookworm GH

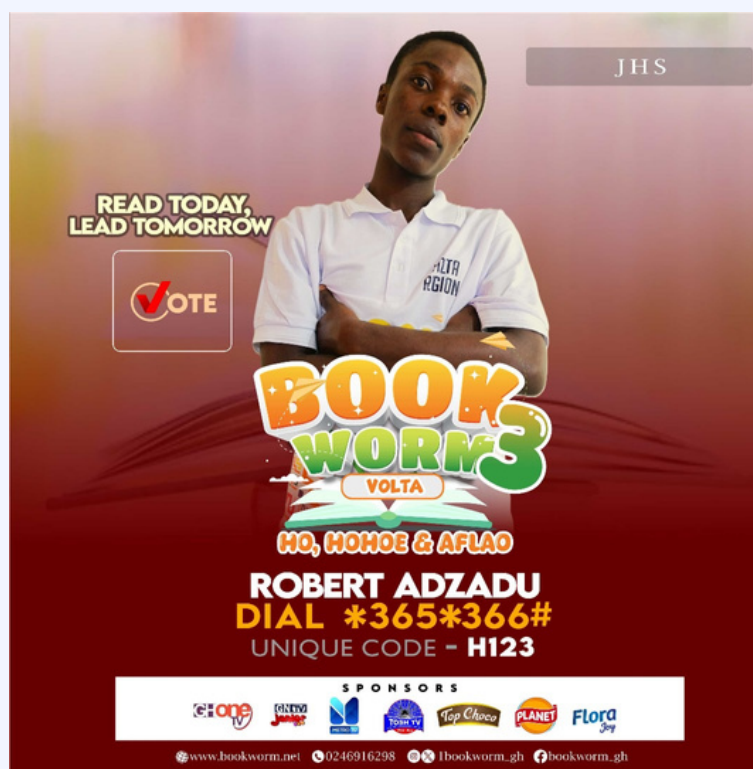
Three students from Gbi Central RC Boys Junior High School in Hohoe are demonstrating how access to inclusive learning spaces can unlock academic potential and national recognition. During a recent monitoring visit to the Hohoe East Cluster of Schools Library, the Spring-UP Global Network team engaged with Robert Adzadu, Kelvin Nito, and Senyo Soglo, who shared how the refurbished library has significantly impacted their learning journey.

Prior to the refurbishment, students had limited access to diverse reading materials, which hindered the development of strong reading habits. Today, the story is different. With over 1,000 books and a professionally designed reading space, the library has become a hub for exploration, literacy, and personal growth. The boys now spend their free periods immersed in storybooks and educational resources, reporting improvements in reading fluency, comprehension, and overall academic performance.



"Whenever it's time for library period or we have any free time like PLC, we come to the library to study books. The library has helped me improve my reading skills,"

**Kelvin Nito, Student,
Gbi Central RC JHS**



Well-wishers and supporters can vote for the students in the ongoing competition by dialing *365*366# on any network and entering their unique codes:

- Robert Adzadu – H123
- Senyo Soglo – H119
- Kelvin Nito – H112

Their participation is a direct outcome of the Deloitte WorldClass Initiative, which funded the refurbishment of the Hohoe East Cluster of Schools Library. Inaugurated on May 3, 2024, by the Volta Regional Director of Education, Mr. Francis Yaw Agbemadi, the library has been made accessible to over 3,133 students from seven beneficiary schools. It features a repurposed and professionally designed space that includes an Early Childhood Education (ECE) corner, an interactive reading floor, talking walls, and murals to stimulate curiosity and a STEM zone to promote inquiry-based learning.

Mr. Jerry Awuku, librarian for the Hohoe East Cluster of Schools, commended the initiative:

When the children started visiting, I saw the interest grow. More than 500 pupils have accessed this library since it was inaugurated. Because it is located at Gbi Central RC Boys, they visit often during their library hours.”

Spring-UP Global Network celebrates the achievements of Robert, Kelvin, and Senyo and reaffirms its commitment to driving literacy equity and career readiness in underserved communities. Their story is a powerful reminder that when children are given the right tools, books, space, and mentorship, they rise.



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Mr. Jerry Awuku, librarian for the Hohoe East Cluster of Schools,



Spring-UP Alumnus at UMBC: Enoch Damte's Story of Climate Advocacy and Mentorship

From Katakyaase to the United States, Enoch Damte's journey is a powerful example of how education, resilience, and volunteerism can transform lives.

Growing up in Katakyaase, a remote village in Ghana, Enoch faced the challenges of navigating basic school education without structured mentorship or access to reliable guidance. Despite these hurdles, he earned First-Class Honours in Geography and Resource Development with Sociology from the University of Ghana.

He later served as a Teaching and Research Assistant and completed an MPhil in Climate Change and Sustainability Science, funded by the Africa Climate Change Adaptation Initiative (ACCAI).

During his postgraduate studies, Enoch co-authored a scholarly article titled "Urbanization, Climate Change and Health Vulnerabilities in Slum Communities in Ghana", published in the Journal of Climate Change and Health. He also worked as a Health Administrative Manager at the 37 Military Hospital, gaining valuable leadership experience.

Today, Enoch is a Dean's Doctoral Fellowship Awardee at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), where he is pursuing a PhD in Geography and Environmental Systems. His research explores the intersection of climate change, water security, human health, and environmental sustainability.



"Volunteering with Spring-UP Global Network gave me the chance to turn my own challenges into something meaningful for others. Being part of a network of young, passionate, and experienced volunteers and alumni has been incredibly energising. We're all committed to making a real difference in communities that need it most, through literacy, mentorship, and STEAM education."

Enoch Dampte

For Enoch, volunteering with Spring-UP Global Network has been more than a way to give back, it has been a platform for growth, connection, and relevance. As a doctoral researcher, he brings his academic expertise into Spring-UP's Career Guidance and STEM Mentorship sessions, helping students connect classroom learning to real-world challenges.

Through these interactions, Enoch not only shares knowledge but also builds trust and inspiration. Students see someone who looks like them, speaks their language, and is actively solving global problems—making careers in STEM and climate science feel attainable.

Before travelling for his PhD, Enoch actively participated in several outreach programmes. In May 2024, he attended the launch of the Aburi Cluster of Schools Library, the eighth library under the Deloitte WorldClass Initiative and the tenth under Spring-UP's iRead iLead Campaign.

In January 2025, he joined the team at Agbekotsekpo D/A Basic School for a Career Guidance and STEM Mentorship Seminar held in commemoration of International Education Day, reaching 80 students with mentorship and climate awareness activities.



Enoch's journey illustrates the transformative power of education and service. His story is a reminder that volunteering isn't just about filling a gap; it's about building bridges between knowledge and opportunity, between local action and global relevance.

At Spring-UP Global Network, while we remain committed to driving literacy equity and career readiness, we are equally passionate about championing youth empowerment. By providing platforms for young people to nurture their skills, we open doors to global opportunities, just like Enoch's.

His journey affirms that when young changemakers seize opportunities to serve their communities, they rise, and, in doing so, sharpen their skills for national and global impact.

Spring-UP Global Network

Driving Literacy Equity and Career Readiness in Underserved Communities through Libraries, Mentorship, and STEAM

